

## Indicator 7.1a: Extent to which the legal framework supports the conservation and sustainable management of forests (2024)



This indicator outlines the support that the legal system gives to the sustainable management of forests. A legal system that ensures transparency and public participation in policy and decision-making processes supports the continuous improvements in sustainable forest management.

### Context and definitions

An effective legal framework that ensures transparency in land ownership, management planning and operational implementation supports sustainable forest management. It also enables the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other peoples in policy development and decision-making processes.

### Forest management plan

A documented, long-term plan for a forest area that defines management goals, objectives and outcomes that are monitored and periodically reviewed, and that expressly includes the management of forest.

### Code of forest practice

A set of principles, procedures, guidelines and standards that defines and prescribes minimum acceptable practices in forest management, wood harvesting and associated forestry operations.

Key information is presented here relating to the legal framework for forest management, forest management plans and forest management codes of practice. State-specific information on the legal framework, forest management plans and forest management codes of practice is included as [Supporting information for Indicator 7.1a](#), as is information relating to Regional Forest Agreements, the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, regulations governing firewood collection, and the *Illegal Logging Prohibition Act 2012*.

### Key points

- All states and territories and the Australian Government have legislation that supports the conservation and sustainable management of Australia's forests.
- A total of 37.7 million hectares (28% of total forest area) were covered by management plans relating to their conservation and sustainable management in 2021.
- Forest management codes of practice are a legal requirement for prescribing standards for sustainable forest management practices in public and private plantation and native forests managed for wood production in some states and territories.

### Legal framework for forest management

In Australia, state and territory governments have primary responsibility for land and forest management. In addition, the Australian Government has certain national-level powers and responsibilities, particularly through the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and Regional Forest Agreements.

All states and territories have legislation and dependent regulations designed to ensure the conservation and sustainable management of forests in their jurisdictions (Table 7.1a-1). Some of this legislation is administered

jointly by, and requires coordination between, state or territory and local governments, statutory authorities and regional management authorities.

State and territory legislative provisions cover planning, review, and regulation of forest management activities in multiple-use public forests, public nature conservation reserves and, to a lesser extent, private and leasehold forests. Applying best practice standards to forest management activities is generally a legislative requirement. An effective legal and regulatory framework therefore promotes continuous improvement in the sustainable management of forests.

**Table 7.1a-1: Current key legislation that supports conservation and sustainable management of Australia’s forests, by jurisdiction**

Jurisdiction	Legislation title	Purpose in relation to the conservation and management of Australia’s forest
<b>Australia</b>		
	<i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984</i>	To provide for the preservation and protection from injury or desecration of areas and objects in Australia and in Australian waters, being areas and objects that are of particular significance to Aboriginals in accordance with Aboriginal tradition.
	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>	To provide a legal framework to protect and manage, among other things, nationally and internationally important flora, fauna, ecological communities and heritage places – defined in the Act as matters of national environmental significance.
	<i>Regional Forest Agreements Act 2002</i>	To give effect to Commonwealth obligations under Regional Forest Agreements, which are long-term agreements for the conservation and sustainable management of Australia’s native forests in the regions in which they apply.  The legislation also requires the establishment of a comprehensive and publicly available source of information for national and regional monitoring and reporting in relation to all of Australia’s forests, to support decision-making in relation to all of Australia’s forests. <i>Australia’s State of the Forests Report</i> fulfils this requirement.
	<i>Illegal Logging Prohibition Act 2012</i>	To support the domestic and international trade in legally harvested wood and wood products by giving consumers and businesses greater certainty about the legality of the wood products they purchase.
<b>Australian Capital Territory</b>		
	<i>Environment Protection Act 1997</i>	To establish an environmental duty of care in relation to water quality and other environmental pressures, and to protect soil and water quality during harvesting through the application of a pollution control licence.
	<i>Planning and Development Act 2007</i>	To provide a planning and land system that contributes to the orderly and sustainable development of the Australian Capital Territory consistent with the social, environmental and economic aspirations of the people of the Australian Capital Territory, including establishing the planning and development of management objectives for public reserves.
	<i>Water Resources Act 2007</i>	To ensure management and use of the water resources of the Territory sustain the physical, economic and social wellbeing of the people of the Australian Capital Territory while protecting the ecosystems that depend on those resources.
	<i>Public Unleased Land Act 2013</i>	To protect the amenity and natural value of, and to facilitate use of, unleased territory land that the public is entitled to use or is open to, or used by, the public, including nature conservation reserves and wilderness areas.
	<i>Nature Conservation Act 2014</i>	To make provision for the protection, conservation, enhancement and management of nature in the Australian Capital Territory, and for the management of public reserves.

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Legislation title</b>	<b>Purpose in relation to the conservation and management of Australia's forest</b>
<b>New South Wales</b>		
	<i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974</i>	To conserve nature, including threatened species; conserve objects, places and features of cultural value; and foster public appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of nature and cultural heritage and their conservation. The Act prescribes management requirements for the majority of the New South Wales public reserve system and the protection and management of Aboriginal heritage.
	<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>	To encourage the proper management, development and conservation of natural and artificial resources; for the social and economic welfare of the community and a better environment; to promote and co-ordinate the orderly and economic use and development of land; to protect the environment, including the protection and conservation of native animals and plants, including threatened species and ecological communities, and their habitats; ecologically sustainable development; to promote the sharing of the responsibility for environmental planning between the different levels of government in the State; and to provide increased opportunity for public involvement and participation in environmental planning and assessment.
	<i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997</i>	To protect, restore and enhance the quality of the environment in New South Wales, having regard to the need to maintain ecologically sustainable development.
	<i>Plantations and Reafforestation Act 1999</i>	To facilitate the reafforestation of land; to promote and facilitate development for timber plantations on essentially cleared land; and to codify best practice environmental standards, and provide a streamlined and integrated scheme, for the establishment, management and harvesting of timber and other forest plantations on public and private land.
	<i>Forestry Act 2012</i>	To provide for the dedication, management, regulation and use of State forests and other Crown-timber land for forestry; and the delivery of ecologically sustainable forest management, and the dedication of flora reserves in State forests.
	<i>Local Land Services Act 2013</i>	To provide for the regulation of native vegetation management on private land and the authorisation and regulation of private native forestry operations.
	<i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i>	To provide for the maintenance of a healthy, productive and resilient environment consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development; the listing of threatened species (flora and fauna), threatened ecological communities, and threatening processes; and voluntary conservation measures for private land. It also provides enforcement powers and compliance tools to the Environment Protection Authority to regulate public and private native forestry.
	<i>Crown Land Management Act 2016</i>	To provide for the ownership, use and management of the Crown land of New South Wales; to require environmental, social, cultural heritage and economic considerations to be taken into account in decision-making about Crown land; to provide for the consistent, efficient, fair and transparent management of Crown land for the benefit of the people of New South Wales; and to facilitate the use of Crown land by the Aboriginal people of New South Wales.
<b>Northern Territory</b>		
	<i>Pastoral Land Act 1992</i>	To make provision for the conversion and granting of title to pastoral land and the administration, management and conservation of pastoral land.
	<i>Planning Act 1999</i>	To provide for appropriate and orderly planning and control of the use and development of land; promote the sustainable development of land; promote the responsible use of land and water resources to limit the adverse effects of development on ecological processes; and maintain the health of the natural environment and ecological processes.

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Legislation title</b>	<b>Purpose in relation to the conservation and management of Australia's forest</b>
	<i>Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1976</i>	To make provision for and in relation to the establishment of Territory Parks and other Parks and Reserves and the study, protection, conservation and sustainable utilisation of wildlife.
	<i>Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority Act 2012</i>	To establish the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority, to promote ecologically sustainable development, and to protect the environment, having regard to the need to enable ecologically sustainable development.
	<i>Environment Protection Act 2019</i>	To protect the environment of the Territory; promote ecologically sustainable development so that the wellbeing of the people of the Territory is maintained or improved without adverse impact on the environment of the Territory; recognise the role of environmental impact assessment and environmental approval in promoting the protection and management of the environment of the Territory; provide for broad community involvement during the process of environmental impact assessment and environmental approval; and to recognise the role that Aboriginal people have as stewards of their country as conferred under their traditions and recognised in law, and the importance of participation by Aboriginal people and communities in environmental decision-making processes. This Act replaced the <i>Environmental Assessment Act 1982</i> from June 2020.
<b>Queensland</b>		
	<i>Forestry Act 1959</i>	To provide for forest reservations, the management, silvicultural treatment and protection of State forests, and the sale and disposal of forest products and quarry material, which are the property of the Crown in State forests and timber reserves, and on other lands.
	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>	The conservation of nature while allowing for the involvement of Indigenous people in the management of protected areas in which they have an interest under Aboriginal tradition or Island custom.
	<i>Land Act 1994</i>	To provide for the management of all land for the benefit of the people of Queensland by having regard to sustainable resource use, land evaluation, development in the context of the State's planning framework, community purpose, protection of environmentally and culturally valuable and sensitive areas and features, community consultation, and accountable administration.
	<i>Vegetation Management Act 1999</i>	To regulate the clearing of vegetation in a way that conserves remnant vegetation, conserves vegetation in declared areas, ensures that clearing does not cause land degradation, prevents the loss of biodiversity, maintains ecological processes, manages the environmental effects of clearing, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and allows for sustainable land use.
	<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>	To provide effective recognition, protection and conservation of Aboriginal cultural heritage.
	<i>Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>	To provide effective recognition, protection and conservation of Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage.
	<i>Cape York Peninsula Heritage Act 2007</i>	To identify significant natural and cultural values of Cape York Peninsula; and to provide for cooperative management, protection and ecologically sustainable use of land, including pastoral land, in the Cape York Peninsula Region; to recognise the economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations of Indigenous communities in relation to land use in the Cape York Peninsula Region; and to recognise the contribution of the pastoral industry in the Cape York Peninsula Region to the economy and land management in the region.
<b>South Australia</b>		
	<i>Forestry Act 1950</i>	To provide for the creation and management of State forests, the declaration of native forest reserves, and the conservation and management of native forest reserves.

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Legislation title</b>	<b>Purpose in relation to the conservation and management of Australia's forest</b>
	<i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972</i>	To provide for the establishment and management of reserves for public benefit and enjoyment, and to provide for the conservation of wildlife in a natural environment.
	<i>Native Vegetation Act 1991</i>	To provide incentives and assistance to landowners in relation to the preservation and enhancement of native vegetation, and to control the clearance of native vegetation.
	<i>Wilderness Protection Act 1992</i>	To provide for the protection and management of wilderness and the restoration of land to its condition before European colonisation.
	<i>Environment Protection Act 1993</i>	To promote the principles of ecologically sustainable development based on sound environmental practices and policies that protect, restore and enhance the quality of the environment; and to establish the Environment Protection Authority and define its functions and powers.
	<i>Crown Land Management Act 2009</i>	To make provision for the disposal, management and conservation of Crown land.
	<i>Landscape South Australia Act 2019</i>	To promote sustainable and integrated management of the State's landscapes, to make provision for the protection of the State's natural resources.
<b>Tasmania</b>		
	<i>Crown Lands Act 1976</i>	To make provisions with respect to the management, sale, and disposal of the lands of the Crown other than land reserved under the <i>Nature Conservation Act 2002</i> and land designated as Permanent Timber Production Zone land under the <i>Forest Management Act 2013</i> . This includes land reserved as a public reserve under the Act for the protection and maintenance of biophysical, natural, cultural or economic values.
	<i>Forest Practices Act 1985</i>	To establish the Forest Practices Code and forest practices system to provide for the sustainable management of forests on any land subject to forest operations; and to enable the establishment of private timber reserves on private land to provide security of long-term forestry use for landowners.
	<i>Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993</i>	To establish a resource management and land use planning and approvals system for Tasmania. Forest practices on public land and on private timber reserves are exempt from this Act.
	<i>National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002</i>	To provide for the management of national parks and other reserved land, according to management objectives for each reserve class.
	<i>Nature Conservation Act 2002</i>	To make provision with respect to the conservation and protection of the fauna, flora and geological diversity of the State; to provide for the declaration of national parks and other reserved land; to classify reserved lands and establish values and objectives for each reserve class.
	<i>Forest Management Act 2013</i>	To provide for the sustainable management of Permanent Timber Production Zone (PTPZ) land by the forestry corporation established under the repealed <i>Forestry Act 1920</i> .
	<i>Forestry (Rebuilding the Forest Industry) Act 2014</i>	To establish and provide for the management of Future Potential Production Forest (FPPF) land and its possible future transfer to PTPZ land; to provide for the development of a special species management plan, and approvals to undertake special species timber harvesting on FPPF land.
<b>Victoria</b>		
	<i>Forests Act 1958</i>	To provide for the management of State forests, including timber harvesting and fire management; for timber harvesting to comply with a code of practice; and for the protection of State forests and forest produce as property of the Crown, including prohibiting the cutting or taking of timber in a State forest without authority.
	<i>National Parks Act 1975</i>	To make provision, in respect of national parks and State parks, for the preservation and protection of the natural environment including wilderness areas and remote and natural areas in those parks; for the protection and

Jurisdiction	Legislation title	Purpose in relation to the conservation and management of Australia's forest
		preservation of indigenous flora and fauna and of features of scenic or archaeological, ecological, geological, historic or other scientific interest in those parks for the study of ecology, geology, botany, zoology and other sciences relating to the conservation of the natural environment in those parks; and for the responsible management of the land in those parks.
	<i>Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978</i>	To provide for the reservation of Crown lands for certain purposes and for the management of such reserved lands.
	<i>Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987</i>	To provide a legislative framework for a land-management system and to make necessary administrative, financial and enforcement provisions; and to establish a system of land management co-operative agreements; to enable the Minister to be an effective conservator of the State's lands, waters, flora and fauna; and to make provision for the productive, educational and recreational use of the State's lands, waters, flora and fauna in ways which are environmentally sound, socially just and economically efficient.
	<i>Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988</i>	To establish a legal and administrative structure to enable and promote the conservation of Victoria's native flora and fauna and to provide for a choice of procedures which can be used for the conservation, management or control of flora and fauna and the management of potentially threatening processes.
	<i>Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994</i>	To establish a framework for the integrated and co-ordinated management and protection of catchments, which will maintain and enhance long-term land productivity while also conserving the environment; aim to ensure that the quality of the State's land and water resources and their associated plant and animal life are maintained and enhanced; and to encourage community participation in the management of land and water resources.
	<i>Sustainable Forests (Timber) Act 2004</i>	To provide a framework for sustainable forest management and sustainable timber harvesting in State forests; to provide for the granting of long-term access to timber resources in State forests.
	<i>Forests Legislation Amendment (Compliance and Enforcement) Act 2021</i>	To amend the <i>Sustainable Forests (Timber) Act 2004</i> to amend the offence relating to unauthorised timber harvesting operations, and to clarify the requirement to comply with any relevant Code of Practice; to amend the <i>Forests Act 1958</i> , to insert an offence prohibiting the cutting or taking of timber in a State forest without authority; to amend the <i>Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987</i> to provide for mandatory injunctions in certain circumstances.
<b>Western Australia</b>		
	<i>Conservation and Land Management Act 1984</i>	To make provision for the use, protection and management of certain public lands and waters, and their flora and fauna, and to establish responsible authorities.
	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i>	To provide for an Environmental Protection Authority, for the prevention, control and abatement of pollution and environmental harm, for the conservation, preservation, protection, enhancement and management of the environment.
	<i>Forest Products Act 2000</i>	To establish the Forest Products Commission, to provide for the harvesting and sale of forest products from native forests and plantations on State forest and timber reserves, and their regeneration or replanting, in specified areas in the south west of the State; and to repeal the <i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i> and the <i>Sandalwood Act 1929</i> .
	<i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i>	To provide for the conservation and protection of biodiversity and biodiversity components, and the ecologically sustainable use of biodiversity components in Western Australia; and to repeal the <i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i> and the <i>Sandalwood Act 1929</i> .

Source: State, territory and Australian Government agencies.

## Forest management plans

A forest area with a management plan is an area for which there is a long-term, documented and periodically reviewed management plan containing defined management goals.

Australia's publicly managed plantation forests and public native forests (including those in nature conservation reserves and those available for wood production) are governed and managed under state or territory regulatory frameworks and management plans that provide guidance for sustainable forest management practices. A small number of nature conservation reserves are governed and managed by the Australian Government under Commonwealth legislation and management plans prescribed in that legislation. Some privately owned or managed forests covered by a forest certification scheme also have formal management plans.

As at 2021, a total of 37.7 million hectares (28% of Australia's forests) were covered by management plans relating to their conservation and sustainable management (Table 7.1a-2). Management plans are in place for 25.9 million hectares of forest in the National Reserve System, and 10.8 million hectares of multiple-use public forest and the Defence estate.

**Table 7.1a-2: Forests with a management plan**

Forests with a management plan	Area ('000 hectares)								Australia
	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	
Primarily conservation <sup>a</sup>	109	5,435	6,094	2,861	1,683	1,537	3,797	4,419	25,935
Multiple values including wood production <sup>b</sup>	17	1,768	903	3,558 <sup>c</sup>	52	656	2,515	1,295	10,766
Private forest with industry certification <sup>d</sup>	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	960
<b>Total forests with a management plan</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>37,660</b>

n.a., not available

<sup>a</sup> 'Primarily conservation' comprises forest areas in the National Reserve System (Collaborative Australian Protected Areas Database) with an existing, identified management plan, World Heritage area, Ramsar Wetlands of International Importance and Informal reserves on multiple-use public forest.

<sup>b</sup> 'Multiple values including wood production' comprises predominantly the area of multiple-use public forests covered by management plans along with the area of forest managed by the Australian Government Department of Defence that is subject to Defence estate environment management plans. Excludes areas managed primarily for conservation (see 'Primarily conservation').

<sup>c</sup> The area reported for Queensland in [Australia's State of the Forest Report 2018](#) (18,236,000 ha, as at 2016) is now considered anomalous, as it results from certification then removal of largely non-forested areas from Queensland's defined forest area.

<sup>d</sup> 'Private forest with industry certification' includes privately owned or managed production forests covered by a forest certification scheme.

Source: CAPAD 2020, Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water; Australian Government Department of Defence; publicly accessible data on Australian certified forests from Responsible wood and Forest Stewardship Council.

[Click here for a Microsoft Excel workbook of the data for Table 7.1a-2.](#)

The increase compared to [Australia's State of the Forest Report 2018](#) in the area of 'Primarily conservation' forest with a management plan is due to additional areas that now have a management plan, as well as consideration of additional types of conservation area (World Heritage areas, Ramsar wetlands, and informal reserves). The decrease in the area of 'Multiple values including wood production' forest with a management plan is mainly due to the area previously reported for Queensland (18.2 million hectares at 2016) now being considered anomalous as it results from certification then removal of largely non-forested areas from Queensland's defined forest area.

**Table 7.1a-3: Examples of management plans prescribed in legislation for the conservation and sustainable management of Australia's forests**

Jurisdiction	Plan	Purpose	Coverage
Australian Capital Territory			

Jurisdiction	Plan	Purpose	Coverage
	<b>Reserve management plans</b> – required under the <i>Planning and Development Act 2007</i> and the <i>Nature Conservation Act 2014</i> for public land reserves.	These plans are legal documents that identify what is important about an area (its values), what is hoped to be achieved in the management of the area (objectives) and how the objectives will be achieved (policies and actions). Preparation includes extensive consultation with key stakeholders and a statutory requirement to consult members of the public.	Forest and non-forest areas of Molonglo River Reserve, Lower Cotter Catchment, Tidbinbilla, Namadgi National Park, Murrumbidgee River Corridor, and Canberra Nature Park.
<b>New South Wales</b>			
	<b>Forest Management Plans and Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management Plans<sup>a</sup></b> – required under the <i>Forestry Act 2012</i>	To publicly document the broad strategies, ecological principles, performance indicators and measurable outcomes for forest management, and commitment to ecologically sustainable forest management (ESFM).	New South Wales State forests and other tenures, i.e. all areas within the ‘Defined Forest Area’ of the Forestry Corporation of New South Wales.
	<b>Working Plans</b> for flora reserves in State forests – required under the <i>Forestry Act 2012</i> .	To detail management to protect and maintain high conservation values in flora reserves, and to detail the activities permitted. Flora reserves offer similar conservation and public use benefits to those offered through the national park estate managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service.	Flora reserves in New South Wales State forests. The New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service has been appointed as the land manager for some flora reserves, with the majority managed by the Forestry Corporation of New South Wales.
	<b>Plans of management for national parks and reserves</b> – required under the <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974</i>	To guide the conservation of biodiversity, rehabilitation of landscapes and the protection of natural and cultural heritage, including protection of world heritage values and management of world heritage properties in a park.	National parks and reserves (forest and non-forest) across New South Wales. Statements of management intent are available for those parks and reserves where a plan of management still needs to be prepared.
	<b>Special Areas Strategic Plan of Management 2015</b> – required under the <i>Water NSW Act 2014</i>	Provides the strategic framework for the planning, delivery and reporting of land management activities within the Special Areas (about 364,000 hectares) by WaterNSW and New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service. It is a long-term plan to secure high-quality water for the storages, maintenance of ecosystem integrity, and the management of cultural values within the Special Areas.	Special Areas (forest and non-forest) surround and protect water supply storages for Sydney, the Illawarra, Blue Mountains, Southern Highlands and Shoalhaven regions.
<b>Northern Territory</b>			
	<b>Plans of management or joint management plans for parks and reserves</b> – required under the <i>Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1976</i>	To promote management that is consistent with biological, natural, cultural, recreational and tourism values, and ensures the survival of populations of wildlife within identified areas of habitat, vegetation, ecosystems or landscapes.	Parks and reserves (forest and non-forest) across the Northern Territory.
<b>Queensland</b>			
	<b>Management plans and management statements for protected areas</b> –	To identify key natural and cultural values and propose strategies for day-to-day and long-term management to protect those values.	Protected areas (forest and non-forest) across Queensland.



Jurisdiction	Plan	Purpose	Coverage
	required under the <i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>		
<b>South Australia</b>			
	<b>Landscape South Australia board plans</b> – required under the <i>Landscape South Australia Act 2019</i>	As required under the <i>Landscape South Australia Act 2019</i> , and as specified in the plan for each of the eight regional Landscape South Australia boards responsible for administering the <i>Landscape South Australia Act 2019</i> .	Natural resources in eight regions (forest and non-forest) across South Australia.
	<b>Roadside vegetation management plans</b> – required under the <i>Native Vegetation Act 1991</i>	As required under the <i>Native Vegetation Act 1991</i> , and as specified in the plan for each region.	Region-by-region where vegetation, including forests, exists on roadsides in South Australia.
	<b>Plans of management for national parks and other reserves</b> – required under the <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972</i> , and for <b>wilderness protection areas</b> under the <i>Wilderness Protection Act 1992</i>	The preservation and management of wildlife, Aboriginal and other historic features of spiritual or cultural significance, and features of geographical, natural or scenic interest. This may include the prohibition of unauthorised access to portions of wilderness protection areas.	National parks, other reserves and wilderness protection areas (forest and non-forest) across South Australia.
<b>Tasmania</b>			
	<b>Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Management Plan 2016</b> – required under Tasmania’s <i>National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002</i> and the Commonwealth’s <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>	The plan identifies the natural and cultural values of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (about 1.58 million hectares), particularly values that underpin its World Heritage listing. It also identifies the key threats to those values and provides for their protection through management actions, monitoring and research priorities, and an adaptive management framework.	The Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area – temperate wilderness (forest and non-forest) in the south-west of Tasmania.
	<b>Management plans for nature conservations reserves</b> , by reserve class – required under the <i>National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002</i>	The objectives of management plans vary by reserve class, though they generally aim to conserve natural biological diversity, geological diversity, sites or areas of cultural significance, and preserve the quality of water and protect catchments.	Forest and non-forest across Tasmania in national parks, State reserves, nature reserves, game reserves, conservation areas, nature recreation areas, regional reserves, and historic sites; and for private sanctuaries and private nature reserves, but only in consultation with the owner of the land.
<b>Victoria</b>			
	<b>Forest Management Plans</b> – required under the <i>Forest Act 1958</i>	To ensure that State forest is managed in an environmentally sensitive, sustainable and economically viable manner, while being responsive to changing community expectations and expanding knowledge of the forest ecosystem.	State forests in Victoria’s fourteen Forest Management Areas.
	<b>Action Statements</b> required under the <i>Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988</i>	One of several legislative tools used to inform conservation and investment decisions to support threatened species and ecological community recovery and to manage and mitigate potentially threatening processes.	For all taxa, communities and potentially threatening processes (in forest and non-forest areas) listed under the Act.

Jurisdiction	Plan	Purpose	Coverage
	<b>The Greater Alpine National Parks Management Plan</b> – established under the <i>National Parks Act 1975</i>	A strategic guide for active management of Victoria’s Greater Alpine National Parks (about 900,000 hectares), to protect and enhance their natural, cultural and recreational values. It replaced management plans for the Alpine, Baw Baw, Errinundra, Mount Buffalo, and Snowy River National Parks.	Five national parks, one wilderness park, one other park and five historic areas (forest and non-forest) within Victoria’s alpine and eastern highlands areas.
	<b>River Red Gum Parks Management Plan</b> – established under the <i>National Parks Act 1975</i>	A strategic guide taking a multi-park approach for managing and protecting a large area of River Red Gum forests, including three internationally significant Ramsar wetlands, many highly significant Aboriginal places, several important post-settlement sites, significant geological features, and a diverse range of flora and fauna, including many threatened species (across about 215,000 hectares).	Five national parks and about 100 other parks and reserves (forest and non-forest) in northern Victoria along the Murray, Goulburn and Ovens rivers.
	<b>Plans of management, or joint management plans, for national parks, State parks and reserves</b> – required under the <i>National Parks Act 1975</i>	To identify the vision, goals, outcomes, measures and long-term strategies for nature conservation action and recreation, for future management over a 15-year timeframe (for about 3.3 million hectares of land). Joint Management Plans also emphasise nature conservation and recreation but bring an increased focus on cultural values, protection of Aboriginal places and the participation of Traditional Owners in management of their traditional country.	National parks, State parks and other reserves (forest and non-forest) across Victoria.
<b>Western Australia</b>			
	<b>Forest Management Plan 2014-2023 and Forest Management Plan 2024-2033</b> – required under the <i>Conservation and Land Management Act 1984</i>	To set out the actions to be taken to conserve biodiversity; sustain the health, vitality and productive capacity of ecosystems; and produce the social, cultural and economic benefits valued by the community, taking account of the principles of ecologically sustainable forest management.	Forests on public land in the south-west of Western Australia that is vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission of Western Australia.
	<b>Management plans for national parks, other parks and reserves</b> – required under the <i>Conservation and Land Management Act 1984</i>	To fulfil demand for recreation by members of the public consistent with the proper conservation of the natural environment, the protection of flora and fauna and the preservation of any feature of archaeological, historic or scientific interest.	National parks, and other parks and reserves (forest and non-forest) across Western Australia.

<sup>a</sup> The New South Wales plans required under the *Forestry Act 2012* include the ESFM Plan Riverina Region, ESFM Plan Western Region, Forest Management Plan Softwood Plantations Division, and Hardwood Forests Division – Forest Management Plan for the Coastal Forests of New South Wales.

Source: State, territory and Australian Government agencies.

## Forest management codes of practice

Forest management codes of practice provide specific guidance for sustainable forest management practices in public and private plantations and native forests managed for wood production in each state and territory, as well as in nature conservation reserves in Tasmania. In production forests the codes cover a range of issues, such as forest planning; forest access and roads; forest harvesting; the conservation of non-wood values; pest, weed and

fire management; and the harvesting of non-wood forest products. The codes vary in their legal status and coverage as summarised in Table 7.1a-4.

**Table 7.1a-4: Forest management codes of practice, their legal status and coverage, by jurisdiction**

Jurisdiction Title	Legal status*	Coverage
<b>Australian Capital Territory</b>		
<i>Code of Forest Practice</i> (2005)	Required under the <i>Environment Protection Act 1997</i>	Public plantations in locations permitted under the Territory Plan
<b>New South Wales</b>		
Integrated Forestry Operations Approvals <sup>a</sup>	Required under the <i>Forestry Act 2012</i>	Forestry operations in public native forests in State forests or other Crown-timber lands
<i>Plantations and Reafforestation (Code) Regulation 2001</i>	Prescribed in the <i>Plantations and Reafforestation Act 1999</i>	Public and private plantations
<i>Private Native Forestry Codes of Practice</i> (2022) <sup>b</sup>	Prescribed in the <i>Local Land Services Act 2013</i>	Private native forests and native forests on Crown tenures that are not Crown-timber land under the <i>Forestry Act 2012</i>
<b>Northern Territory<sup>c</sup></b>		
<i>Codes of Practice for Forestry Plantations</i> (2004)	No legal status	Public and private plantations
<i>Sustainable Forestry Practices – Guidelines for the Northern Territory</i> (2021)	No legal status	Public and private plantations and native forests
<b>Queensland</b>		
<i>Code of practice for native forest timber production on Queensland’s State forest estate 2020</i>	Defines minimum forest management standards to meet requirements of the <i>Forestry Act 1959</i> and other associated legislation.	Public native forests
<i>Managing a native forest practice: A self-assessable vegetation clearing code</i> (2014)	Prescribed in the <i>Vegetation Management Act 1999</i>	Private native forests
<i>Timber Plantation Operations Code of Practice for Queensland</i> (2015)	No legal status	Public and private plantations
<b>South Australia</b>		
<i>Guidelines for Plantation Forestry in South Australia 2009</i>	No legal status but summarises mandatory legal requirements.	Public and private plantations
<b>Tasmania</b>		
<i>Forest Practices Code 2020</i>	Prescribed in the <i>Forest Practices Act 1985</i>	Public native forests, and private native forests, and plantations
<i>Tasmanian Reserve Management Code of Practice 2003</i>	A commitment under the legally binding Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement 1997	Public native forests in conservation reserves
<b>Victoria</b>		
<i>Code of Practice for Timber Production 2014</i>	Prescribed in the <i>Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987</i>	Public native forests, private native forests, and plantations

Jurisdiction	Title	Legal status*	Coverage
	<i>Code of Practice for Bushfire Management on Public Land 2012</i>	Prescribed in the <i>Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987</i>	Public native forests, national parks (including State parks) and other protected public land
<b>Western Australia</b>			
	<i>Code of Practice for Timber Harvesting in Western Australia (1999)</i>	Defines minimum forest management standards to meet requirements of the <i>Conservation and Land Management Act 1984</i> and the <i>Forest Products Act 2000</i>	Public native forests
	<i>Code of Practice for Timber Plantations in Western Australia (2014)</i>	Defines minimum forest management standards to meet requirements of the <i>Conservation and Land Management Act 1984</i> and the <i>Forest Products Act 2000</i>	Public and private plantations

\* Legal status is in relation to sustainable forest management.

<sup>a</sup> Integrated Forestry Operations Approvals (IFOAs) are in place for the following regions: Coastal (which includes the previous IFOA regions of Upper North East, Lower North East, Eden, Southern), South Western Cypress, River Red Gum, and Brigalow-Nandewar.

<sup>b</sup> New Private Native Forestry Codes of Practice were released on 02 May 2022 for four regions in New South Wales (Northern NSW, Southern NSW, River Red Gum Forests, Cypress and Western Hardwood).

<sup>c</sup> The *Sustainable Forestry Practices – Guidelines for the Northern Territory (2021)* is not a code of practice, and has no legal status, but is included because it was developed to provide public information on forestry best practice. The *Sustainable Forestry Practices – Guidelines for the Northern Territory (2021)* was developed because the *Codes of Practice for Forestry Plantations (2004)*, which also has no legal status, was deemed to be no longer fit for purpose by the Northern Territory forestry industry.

Source: State and territory government agencies.

## Supporting information for Indicator 7.1a: Extent to which the legal framework supports the conservation and sustainable management of forests

### Legal framework for forest management

The following information supplied by each state supports the listing of key legislation on Table 7.1a-1:

#### New South Wales

The *Forestry Legislation Amendment Act 2018* updated the *Forestry Act 2012* and other legislation to remove the need for Forestry Corporation of New South Wales to hold multiple licences, which are replaced by an Integrated Forestry Operations Approval for forestry operations on Crown land. It also amended the *Local Lands Services Act 2013* to transfer responsibility for the regulation of private native forestry to Local Land Services.

The *Forestry Legislation Amendment Act 2018* also updated the regulatory framework for public native forestry and the enforcement role of the Environment Protection Authority. It provides a framework for the integration of approvals that authorise the carrying out of forestry operations in accordance with principles of ecologically sustainable forest management and conservation of threatened species, populations and ecological communities.

The *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* was amended in 2020 and 2021 to enable the identification and protection of areas of outstanding biodiversity value. It was also amended in 2021 to enable the creation and dealing of carbon sequestration rights within national parks and reserves.

#### Queensland

The *Human Rights Act 2019* binds all persons, including the State of Queensland, to protect and promote human rights; and to help build a culture in the Queensland public sector that respects and promotes human rights; and to help promote a dialogue about the nature, meaning and scope of human rights. This influences the management of Queensland's forests by requiring public entities to act and make decisions in a way that is compatible with human rights.

#### South Australia

The *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* replaced (and repealed) the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004* in 2020 as the key framework for managing South Australia's land, water, pest plants and animals, and biodiversity across the State. Eight regional Landscape South Australia boards are responsible for administering the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*. A key priority of landscape boards is to support local communities and landowners to be directly responsible for sustainably managing their region's landscapes with an emphasis on land and water management, pest animal and plant control, and biodiversity.

#### Tasmania

The *Forest Practices Act 1985* is designed to ensure that forest operations are conducted in a manner that provides due care for the environment on public and private forest. The *Forest Practices Act 1985* forms part of a broader legislative and policy framework that provides a basis for sustainable forest management in Tasmania. The Act also includes the provision for private timber reserves, which are a means by which private land holders can ensure the security of their forest resources without requiring permits under the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993*.

The *National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002* is the principal Act that sets out the management objectives for conservation reserves declared under the *Nature Conservation Act 2002*. The following mechanisms are in place for nature conservation reserves:

- legislated management objectives for reserve classes

- statutory management plans that require formal public consultation input from the statutory National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council
- independent review of responses to public comment on draft management plans by the Tasmanian Planning Commission
- adherence to the *Tasmanian Reserve Management Code of Practice 2003*
- development applications subject to detailed environmental impact assessment processes.

## Victoria

Table 7.1a-5 lists legislation related to the conservation and management of forests in Victoria that is in addition to that listed in Table 7.1a-1.

**Table 7.1a-5: Other legislation related to the conservation and management of forests in Victoria**

Legislation title	Purpose
<i>Parks Victoria Act 2018</i>	To re-establish Parks Victoria, and to transfer a broad range of direct functions and powers to Parks Victoria in relation to the management of Victoria’s various parks. It also requires Parks Victoria to prepare a land management strategy, which will be reviewed every ten years.
<i>Land Act 1958</i>	To set out the law relating to the sale and occupation of Crown lands, including provision for a range of licences.
<i>Wildlife Act 1975</i>	To provide for State wildlife reserves and nature reserves and to establish procedures, and provide for banning notices and exclusion orders in order to promote the protection and conservation of wildlife, and the prevention of taxa of wildlife from becoming extinct.
<i>Heritage Act 2017</i>	The <i>Heritage Act 2017</i> replaces (with amendments) the <i>Heritage Act 1995</i> . Its purpose is to protect and conserve the cultural heritage of the State, including significant places and objects such as extensive land areas, trees, and archaeological sites/remains assessed as being of significance at a state level (Victorian Heritage Register), and archaeological sites and approved sites of archaeological value listed on the Victorian Heritage Inventory.
<i>Country Fire Authority Act 1958</i>	To confer on the authority a responsibility to prevent and suppress fire on all land in the country area of Victoria and other areas in certain circumstances, and to require the establishment of forestry industry brigades for landowners in circumstances prescribed by the regulations.
<i>Fire Rescue Victoria Act 1958</i>	To establish Fire Rescue Victoria and confer upon it a function for fire suppression in the Fire Rescue Victoria fire district, and other areas in certain circumstances.
<i>Environment Protection Act 2017</i>	To repeal the <i>Environment Protection Act 1970</i> and provide for the continuation of the Environment Protection Authority with a new governance structure including a Governing Board.
<i>Flora and Fauna Guarantee Amendment Act 2019</i>	To make key amendments to the <i>Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988</i> .
<i>Climate Change Act 2017</i>	To provide a legislative foundation to manage climate change risks, maximise the opportunities that arise from decisive action, and drive Victoria’s transition to a climate-resilient community and economy. The Act sets out greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets and sets out policy objectives and guiding principles to inform decision-making and development of government policy.

## Forest management plans and codes of practice

Forest management plans can take many forms. In addition to the examples listed in Table 7.1a-3, natural resource, environment and water catchment management plans cover forests, and components of strategic management planning systems are required for forest management certification. Forests covered by a management plan are mostly public forests, but also include some privately owned or managed forests covered by a forest certification scheme.

Plantation forestry codes of practice are referred to in the *Export Control (Wood and Woodchips) Rules 2021* made under the *Export Control Act 2020* (Cth). The Rules declare certain types of unprocessed wood, including unprocessed wood from a plantation, to be prescribed goods and therefore in need of an export licence. However, in those states where the minister has found that its plantation forestry code of practice protects environmental and heritage values, this declaration does not apply and a licence is not required. Codes of practice were assessed by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) against the *Forest Practices Related to Wood Production in Plantations: national principles*. Plantation forestry codes of practice for seven of the states and territories were approved by the minister in 2013, and for Queensland in 2016.

The following sub-sections, by state and territory, contain management plan and code of practice information as supplied by each state and territory that is in addition to the information presented in Tables 7.1a-3 and 7.1a-4:

### Australian Capital Territory

*Canberra Nature Park Reserve Management Plan 2021*. Canberra Nature Park consists of 39 nature reserves in and around Canberra, which include significant areas of Yellow Box–Red Gum Grassy Woodland. Many of the reserves are valuable for the movement of wildlife through the wider landscape. Many are also heavily used for nature-based recreational activities such as walking, running, mountain-bike riding and dog-walking, due to their proximity to Canberra suburbs. Some are often used for group activities such as orienteering and rogaining. The *Canberra Nature Park Reserve Management Plan 2021* provides guidance on appropriate use of the reserves for these activities and sets out goals, objectives, policies and actions for management of Canberra Nature Park over the subsequent 10 years.

*Lower Cotter Catchment Reserve Management Plan 2018*. The Lower Cotter Catchment provides water for the Cotter Reservoir. After the catchment was burnt in 2003, the Australian Capital Territory government committed to manage the return of the area to a stable and healthy catchment. As part of the catchment's rehabilitation, nearly 15,000 community volunteers have planted over 306,000 trees and shrubs. Recreation activities have been restricted to limit erosion and environmental damage.

The Australian Capital Territory government prepared the *Lower Cotter Catchment Reserve Management Plan 2018* to guide management of the catchment over the next 10 years. The plan sets out how the reserve will be managed and restored over time to a landscape of native vegetation, producing clean water, conserving natural and cultural values, and providing low-impact recreational opportunities for Australian Capital Territory residents and visitors.

*Molonglo River Reserve Management Plan 2019* sets out how the reserve will be managed and restored over time to protect flora and fauna, provide recreational opportunities and minimise the risk of bushfire. It sets out a clear and agreed set of long-term objectives for the reserve and outlines the policy approaches for achieving the objectives. The plan also gives clear guidance on how the land and waters of the reserve will be managed and used.

### New South Wales

[New South Wales Forest Management Framework](#) is the system implemented by the New South Wales government for sustainably managing the State's forestry resources across all public and private land tenures,

including conservation reserves, State forests, private native forests and plantations. The framework includes the legislation, regulations, regulatory instruments and programs supporting the management of forests consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable forest management.

The framework is administered by several State agencies that have complementary roles and responsibilities, including the Environment Protection Authority within the Department of Planning and Environment, and the Forestry Corporation of New South Wales, the Department of Primary Industries, and Local Land Services (part of the Department of Regional New South Wales).

Forest Management Plans (FMPs) of the Forestry Corporation of New South Wales meet the forest management and reporting requirements of the Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management (AS 4708) as well as obligations to have FMPs under the *Forestry Act 2012*. FMPs are a summary of the Forestry Corporation of New South Wales approach to sustainable forest management. They outline the legal and regulatory framework, and demonstrate commitment to ecologically sustainable forest management (ESFM) and to maintaining certification to the Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management (AS 4708).

ESFM is the guiding philosophy behind the management of State forests in New South Wales. It underpins the systems and processes applied by the Forestry Corporation of New South Wales, and maintains high ecological principles and biodiversity while taking into consideration the needs and benefits to communities and industry.

Private Native Forestry Property Vegetation Plans (PNF PVP) are legally binding agreements between a landholder and the Environment Protection Authority (EPA). Private native forestry (PNF) in New South Wales is regulated under the *Local Land Services Act 2013*. The *Local Land Services Act 2013* provides the EPA with the function of monitoring forestry operations (under an approved PNF PVP) and the function of enforcing compliance with the requirements for forestry operations through the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*. Under the Act, PNF operations can only be undertaken with an approved PNF PVP. Once a PNF PVP is entered into, landholders must implement the minimum operating standards set out in the PNF Code of Practice.

Plans of Management are statutory documents prepared under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, and provide a framework of objectives, principles and policies that guide the conservation management of the natural and cultural heritage values contained in national parks and other reserves. Statements of Management Intent are used to guide reserve management prior to the adoption of a Plan of Management. Plans of Management (including those in Final, Draft or In Preparation stage) and Statements of Management Intent (Final or Draft) within the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service estate cover about seven million hectares. This area includes forest and non-forest areas.

*Special Areas Strategic Plan of Management 2015*: Special Areas are lands declared under the *Water NSW Act 2014* for the following purposes:

- protecting the quality of stored waters, whether intended for drinking or other purposes
- maintaining the ecological integrity of an area of land declared to be a Special Area in a manner that is consistent with the objectives of WaterNSW.

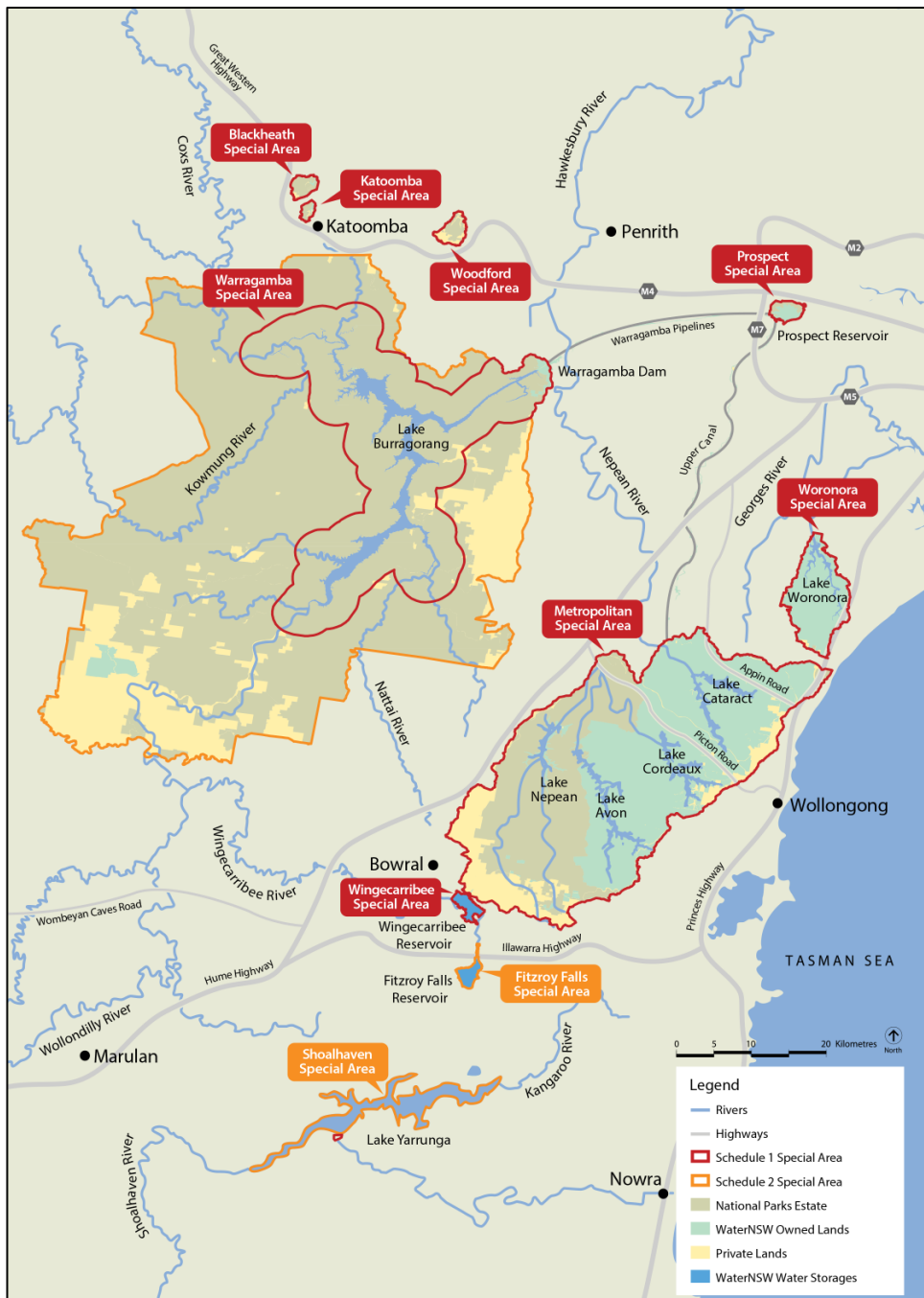
Special Area lands surround and protect drinking water supply storages (Figure 7.1a-1) and are declared under the *Water NSW Act 2014*. Under this legislation, WaterNSW and the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service are required to jointly manage Special Areas by jointly preparing and implementing a plan of management.

WaterNSW has responsibility for the quality of water in Greater Sydney's drinking water catchment areas. The National Parks and Wildlife Service is the primary conservation agency in New South Wales and is also the landowner of reserves within the Special Areas that have been gazetted under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*. Objectives of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* include the conservation of natural and cultural



values in the landscape – objectives that are complementary to the *Water NSW Act 2014* requirement to protect water quality and ecological integrity.

**Figure 7.1a-1: Map of Special Areas managed under the NSW Special Areas Strategic Plan of Management 2015**



*Singleton Military Area Environmental Management Plan* and *Becroft Weapons Range Environmental Management Plan* cover areas managed by the Australian Government Department of Defence. The Singleton Military Area covers 14,000 hectares and the Becroft Weapons Range covers 4,200 hectares. Both areas include forested and non-forested land. The Environmental Management Plans document the biodiversity values of each site and prescribe management actions to ensure Defence activities do not adversely affect those biodiversity values. As part of this the Department of Defence works closely with the State of New South Wales and local agencies to develop and implement components of the Environmental Management System, such as bushfire

management, threatened species monitoring, catchment management, feral animal control and native fauna management.

*Private Native Forestry Codes of Practice* are statutory documents that guide farm forestry operations in New South Wales. The Private Native Forestry Codes set minimum operating standards for harvesting in farm forests in line with ecologically sustainable forest management (ESFM). There are four Private Native Forestry Codes which apply to different regions across New South Wales, namely:

- Northern NSW
- Southern NSW
- River red gum forests
- Cypress and western hardwood forests.

The new Private Native Forestry Codes of Practice commenced in May 2022 after a comprehensive review undertaken by the New South Wales Natural Resources Commission. Local Land Services manages and approves farm forestry via the Private Native Forestry Codes of Practice.

### **Tasmania**

Tasmania's *Forest Practices Code 2020* refers to procedures, manuals, guidelines and processes for forest management, timber harvesting and other forest operations. It provides for the protection and management of environmental values and social values during forest operations, in particular: soils; geomorphology; visual landscape; water quality and flow; flora, fauna, genetic resources and cultural heritage.

Tasmania is the only Australian jurisdiction with a code of practice for the management of nature conservation reserves. The *Tasmanian Reserve Management Code of Practice 2003* complements other codes, including Tasmania's *Forest Practices Code 2020*. It is the result of a commitment under the 1997 Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement to develop and implement a code of practice to cover all environmental practices in reserves. The code provides information and guidance for best-practice operational standards for management activities in Tasmania's nature conservation reserves.

### **Victoria**

Under the *Parks Victoria Act 2018* a Land Management Strategy is required. The *Parks Victoria Land Management Strategy 2022* sets out the vision, long-term strategies and priorities for the protection, management and use of land managed by Parks Victoria, and land managed by committees of management appointed under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* and the *Forests Act 1958*, and land subject to an agreement under the *Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987* that is managed by Parks Victoria. These lands include terrestrial, coastal and marine parks and reserves managed by Parks Victoria and jointly managed with Traditional Owners.

Table 7.1a-6 lists joint management plans prescribed in legislation for the conservation and sustainable management of forests by Traditional Owners with Parks Victoria.

**Table 7.1a-6: Joint management plans prescribed in legislation for the conservation and sustainable management of forests by Traditional Owners with Parks Victoria**

Plan	Purpose	Coverage
<b>Gunaikurnai Joint Management Plan</b>	To enable the knowledge and culture of the Gunaikurnai people to influence, and be recognised in, the management of the parks. The Joint Management Plan with the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation and the Victorian Government was prepared in accordance with the <i>Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987</i> .	Ten jointly managed parks and reserves on Gunaikurnai country.
<b>Joint Management Plan for Barmah National Park</b>	To set the strategic direction for the joint management of Barmah National Park and to enable the knowledge and culture of the Yorta Yorta Nation to influence and be recognised in that management. Joint Management Plan for Barmah National Park was prepared in accordance with the <i>Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987</i> .	Barmah National Park, covering 28,505 hectares of floodplain forests and wetlands on the traditional Country of the Yorta Yorta Nation.
<b>Joint Management Plan for the Dja Dja Wurrung Parks</b>	The plan introduces Traditional Owner knowledge alongside western science to improve park management strategies. The Joint Management Plan with Dja Dja Wurrung people and the Victorian Government was prepared in accordance with the <i>Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987</i> .	Six jointly managed parks and reserves on Dja Dja Wurrung country.

### Western Australia

The *Santalum spicatum* (Sandalwood) *Biodiversity Management Programme 2023*, enabled by the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*, provides for the conservation, protection, and management of native sandalwood to stabilise wild populations through conservation and ecologically sustainable use. Wild sandalwood populations occur on Crown and private lands over 15 Western Australian Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA) bioregions of the Wheatbelt, Goldfields, Murchison, Gascoyne and southern Pilbara.

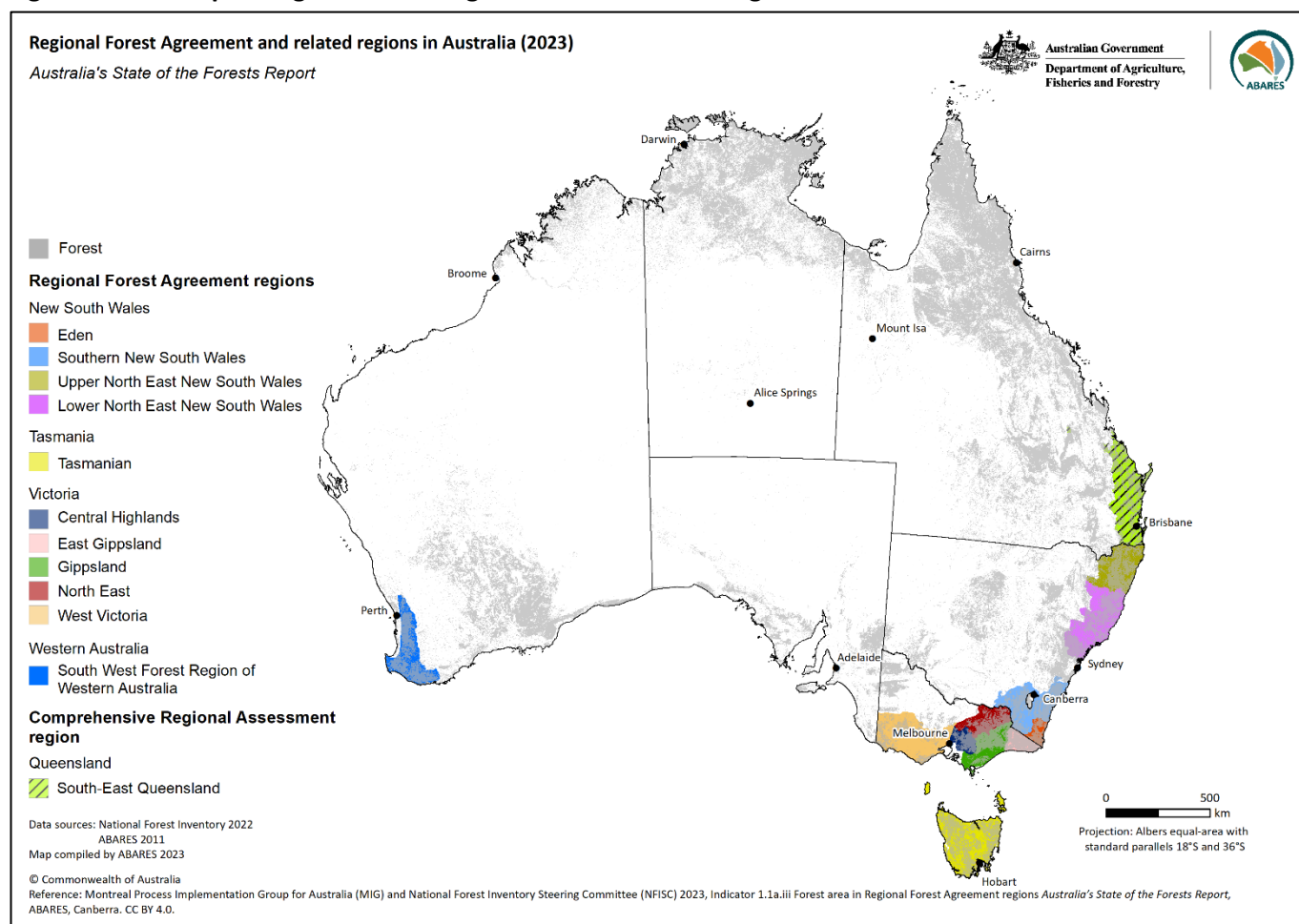
### Regional Forest Agreements

Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs) are long term agreements for the conservation and sustainable management of Australia’s native forests in the regions in which they apply. Ten RFAs were negotiated bilaterally between the Australian Government and four of the six state governments (New South Wales, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia), and commenced between 1997 and 2001. Each of the 10 RFAs is based on a Comprehensive Regional Assessment. The Australian and Queensland governments also completed a Comprehensive Regional Assessment for south-east Queensland but did not create an RFA. Davey (2018) describes the [origins and development of Australia’s regional forest agreements](#).

In October 2013, the Australian Government committed to maintaining its support for long-term RFAs by seeking to establish 20-year ‘rolling lives’ for each RFA. The initial 20-year periods of the 10 RFAs expired between 2017 and 2021. By March 2019, the Tasmanian RFA, the three New South Wales RFAs, and the Western Australia RFA had been extended for a further 20 years following assessment processes. The five RFAs in Victoria were varied in March 2020 with 10-year extensions to June 2030, however Victoria subsequently announced that the five RFAs will end in December 2024.

Figure 7.1a-2 shows the 11 regions to which the 10 RFAs apply (the Upper North East New South Wales region and the Lower North East New South Wales regions are covered by a single RFA). It also shows the region in south-east Queensland for which a Comprehensive Regional Assessment was completed, but no RFA was signed.

**Figure 7.1a-2: Map of Regional Forest Agreement and related regions in Australia**



[Click here for high-definition copy of Figure 7.1a-2.](#)

RFAs are designed to provide stability for forest-based industries, certainty for forest-dependent communities, and conservation of forest ecosystems through a Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative (CAR) reserve system. Each RFA was the result of a Comprehensive Regional Assessment involving substantial scientific study, consultation and negotiation, and covering a diverse range of stakeholder interests. Information was gathered on the social, economic, environmental, and cultural and natural heritage values of each region's forests, and a science-based methodology was used to determine forest allocation for different uses and forest management strategies. The *Regional Forest Agreements Act 2002* gives effect to certain obligations of the Commonwealth under RFAs, including public reporting.

Under the *Regional Forest Agreements Act 2002*, five-yearly RFA review reports on the performance of each RFA are to be tabled in the Australian Parliament by the Australian Government minister with responsibility for forestry. The status of each five-yearly review is detailed in Indicator 7.1d.

In addition, Commonwealth Government export licencing requirements under the *Export Control Act 2020* (Cth) (specifically, the *Export Control (Wood and Woodchips) Rules 2021*) do not apply to the export of wood and wood chips from native forests in a region covered by an RFA.

## Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

Australia's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) applies to matters of national environmental significance, such as World Heritage properties and Natural Heritage places, Ramsar Wetlands of international importance, nationally listed threatened species and ecological communities, internationally listed migratory species, and water resources.

Forestry operations undertaken in accordance with a Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) outside World Heritage areas or Ramsar wetlands do not require additional assessment and approval under Part 3 of the EPBC Act. This recognises that conservation values in each region were assessed as part of Comprehensive Regional Assessments before each RFA was signed, leading to the establishment of the Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative reserve systems and requirements that forestry operations must adhere to the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management (ESFM). The RFAs provide a substitute system and an equivalent level of protection to that provided by Part 3 of the EPBC Act. Davey (2018) discusses the [interrelationship between RFAs and the EPBC Act](#).

## Regulations governing firewood collection

Firewood is wood used for residential heating, whereas fuelwood is wood or wood products used as industrial fuel or for bioenergy production. Firewood is one of the most utilised wood products, and is collected from plantations, agricultural lands and native forests. Its use is an important segment of the forest sector, and important to regional communities. Industrial fuelwood includes wood waste generated during wood processing. Data on firewood and fuelwood consumption (use) are provided in Indicator 6.1d.

Regulations are in place across Australia to protect threatened species and ecological communities from the impacts of firewood collection. Many states and territories regulate the personal and commercial collection of firewood by permit systems. Regulatory controls on the clearing of native vegetation also restrict firewood collection. A [National Approach to Firewood Collection and Use in Australia](#) (ANZECC 2001) was developed and endorsed by governments in 2001, and in August 2005 the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council agreed to a [Voluntary Code of Practice for Firewood Merchants](#) (NRMCC 2005). From 2005, a scheme operated by the [Firewood Association of Australia](#) certified compliance of firewood merchants and suppliers with the voluntary code of practice, but the scheme ceased in 2011, although members of the Firewood Association of Australia continue to adhere to the voluntary code of practice as an ongoing condition of their membership (FAA 2023; DSEWPaC 2011).

## Illegal logging

Australia's *Illegal Logging Prohibition Act 2012* aims to support the trade in legally harvested wood and wood products by giving consumers and businesses greater certainty about the legality of the wood products they purchase. The Act makes it a criminal offence to intentionally, knowingly or recklessly import or process illegally logged timber or timber products, including domestically grown raw logs.

The *Illegal Logging Prohibition Regulation 2012* prescribes due diligence requirements to minimise the risk of obtaining illegally logged wood, and lists the wood products subject to those requirements. The due diligence requirements are for use by importers of the listed wood products and by processors of domestically grown raw logs. In 2019-20, the regulated community was estimated to include about 20,000 importers and about 300 to 400 domestic processors.

[State-specific guidelines](#) were developed and released to help processors better understand the legal frameworks used in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia to regulate the harvesting of wood.

## References

ANZECC (Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council) (2001). [National Approach to Firewood Collection and Use in Australia](#). Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council, Canberra.

NRMMC (Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council) (2005). [Voluntary Code of Practice for Firewood Merchants](#). Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council, Canberra.

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Davey SM (2018). [Regional forest agreements: origins, development and contributions](#), *Australian Forestry* **81**: 64–88.

DSEWPaC (Australian Government Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities) (2011a). [Firewood](#), Australian Government Web Archive, Canberra, accessed 10 October 2023.

## More information

Learn more about [Criterion 7 of Australia's State of the Forest Report](#).

Web [agriculture.gov.au/abares/forestsaustralia/sofr/](http://agriculture.gov.au/abares/forestsaustralia/sofr/)

[Download a Microsoft Excel workbook of the data presented in Indicator 7.1a.](#)

Email [Info.ABARES@aff.gov.au](mailto:Info.ABARES@aff.gov.au)

### Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land and sea, waters, environment and community. We pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands we live and work on, their culture, and their Elders past and present.

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